

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF LYDD TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 20th September 2021 at 6.30pm in the Guild Hall Chamber

Present: Councillors Darren Chapman (Chairman), Mrs Ann Duncan, Clive Goddard, Paul Rye, Martin Sweeney (Town Mayor).

Angela Alexander – Town Clerk

159 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

160 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th March 2021 were approved and signed as a true record.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the last meeting on Monday 28th June 2021 were approved and signed as a true record.

*Proposed by Cllr Mrs Duncan and seconded by Cllr Sweeney
Unanimous*

161 PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUDED

*RESOLVED: that this meeting be held without press or public present as the content of discussions will involve sensitive and confidential matters and is therefore exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the local Government Act 1972, to be treated as confidential by Members
Unanimous*

162 CONFIDENTIALITY

The Chairman advised Committee members on the subject of confidentiality and reminded them that what is discussed at the meeting is not to be discussed outside the meeting unless the matter is put to full Council.

163 GUILDHALL AND HOME

HYBRID WORKING AND MEETINGS IN THE GUILDHALL

The Town Clerk reported that following the meeting held to discuss the concerns of staff for the safe return to work and in person council and committee meetings being held in the Guild Hall which had been held with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairman of Personnel and all staff members all the required measures had been put in place as reported at the last personnel meeting. The arrangements to working Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings in the Guild Hall were going well and continuing working from home at other times in accordance with employed hours was working very well. The new water dispenser means that staff can have a mid-morning break and a hot or cold drink whilst the shared kitchen is out of use. There were very few visitors to the Guild Hall and mostly those are by appointment on a specific matter rather than people dropping in and phone calls were minimal as the majority of people were using email to contact us or via the website. There had been an increase in phone calls the previous week but that was people responding to Lydd in Bloom invitations which is a one off.

Cllr Goddard said that the office was working well under the new flexible arrangements and the organisation of meetings also. He said that at the District Council the arrangements for attending meetings is stricter than here at Lydd Town Council with many continuing to wear masks during the meeting. Councillors are also advised to take a Covid test before attending a meeting in the Civic Centre.

The Town Clerk advised that review meetings had been held with staff members to see if there had been any changes to their circumstances or expectations of working in the office and attending Council and Committee meeting. All members of staff said they did not wish to see any changes to the current safety measures in place.

It was agreed that another review will be carried out prior to the next Personnel Committee meeting or if the position with Covid worsens.

Cllr Chapman said it is important that as an employer we protect our staff. It was agreed that the public should respect the rules set by the Council in this matter.

During lockdown the allotment plot holders had mostly paid their rent at the Allotments to the Allotment Association Management Team at the weekends which had worked really well. The rents are now due in October and the Town Clerk had spoken to the Chairman of the Allotments Association who was willing to provide the same service this year. This will mean there will be few visitors to the Guild Hall during October which is normally the peak time for visitors. The AAMT will be provided with all paperwork and receipt books by the Town Council.

RESOLVED 1.: That the current arrangement of working in the office on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday morning and working from home all other contracted hours continue until the next review.

RESOLVED 2: That the current Covid safety measures for Council and Committee meetings in the Guild Hall continues. That this applies to Councillors, Members of the Public and Staff until the next review.

RESOLVED 3: That the office make arrangements with the Allotment Association Management Team regarding payments for plot holders being taken at the Allotments and that all necessary paperwork is provided to Roger Hooper, Chairman AAMT.

164 CHRISTMAS 2021 CLOSURE AND AUGUST HOLIDAY PERIOD

The Town Clerk reported on the Christmas closure and hours of holiday to be taken for staff members. The Town Clerk reported on this year's August holiday period for those members of staff who are required to Clerk meetings. This had been previously agreed to hold no meetings in August as this allows those staff clerking meetings to take 2 consecutive weeks summer holiday without the cycle of agenda, meeting and minutes preventing this.

Councillors considered the best way to plan the August holiday period for 2022. Cllr Chapman proposed that a simple solution was to close the Guild Hall for 2 weeks in August to facilitate this. Cllr Goddard agreed with Cllr Chapman and said that the Leader and Chief Executive at FHDC had taken the same weeks holiday this year and agreed that a 2-week closure for all staff would be a good solution. Cllr Rye suggested an answer phone and email message advising public to contact the Mayor and Deputy Mayor during this period. The Town Clerk asked if time could be given to prepare the meeting schedule for next year to determine the 2 weeks for the closure. Cllr Mrs Duncan said we should agree this 2-week closure and the Town Clerk to confirm the dates at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Christmas closure dates are confirmed and displayed on the website and noticeboards prior to the Christmas closure. That there is a 2-week closure of the Guild Hall in August and the Town Clerk to bring the meeting schedule and dates to the next Personnel Committee meeting.

165 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

RESOLVED: The Committee received and noted the confidential register of Freedom of Information requests for this period.

166 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (Appendix

RESOLVED: To approve and adopt the Unreasonable Behaviour Policy which will be presented to full Council.

167 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Confidential report 2021/C0010

The Mayor, Committee Chairman and Town Clerk reported on professional and legal advice received. Cllr Chapman reported on the zoom meeting he had with Satswana that morning and the draft letter prepared by Satswana following that meeting.

RESOLVED: The Town Mayor to call an extra ordinary meeting at 6pm on Monday 4th October 2021 where the agenda items will be the Unreasonable Behaviour Policy and the draft letter.

168 STAFFING MATTERS

a) The Town Clerk advised that the Assistant Town Clerk was currently contracted for 15 hours per week which was her starting point with the Council. Since then she has taken on the role of planning clerk and attends Council to take minutes and will be attending the General Purposes Committee to take minutes also. Currently these are claimed as extra hours

RESOLVED: That the Assistant Town Clerk be paid an additional 4 hours per calendar month to work at meetings on a Monday evening.

b) The Town Clerk advised that the Finance Assistant was currently not working due to an accident not relating to work.

RESOLVED: That if we are a person short in the office for any length of time that somebody is brought in to carry out the tasks.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman _____

Date _____